







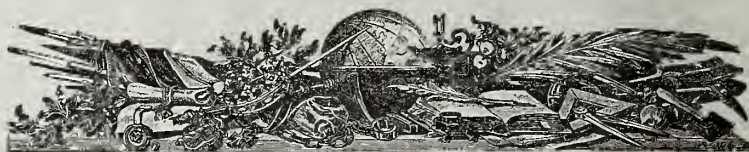
## THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, ESQ.

THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON, FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, ESQ. VOLUME I. BOSTON: PUBLISHED BY S. JOHNSON, AT THE CORNER OF NASSAU AND NATHAN STREETS. 1780.

THE CITY OF BOSTON, situated on a neck of land between the harbor and the bay, is one of the most important and populous cities in the United States. It was first settled in 1630, by a company of Puritan emigrants, who came from England in search of religious freedom. The city grew rapidly, and by 1690 it had become one of the largest and most powerful cities in the colonies. It was the seat of the first colonial assembly, and the first colonial university. It was also the center of the revolutionary movement, and the site of the first battle of the American Revolution. The city has since continued to grow and prosper, and is now one of the most important and populous cities in the United States.





## RUSSIA WARS WITH FRANCE

(Fall of the French General Plelo at the Battle of Dantzig)

*From a drawing by the French artist, Henri Philippe Philippoteaux*

THE death of Peter the Great and then of his wife Catharine I so shortly afterward, left the Russian throne in dispute. There were many candidates, no one of whom was specially strong or shrewd; so plots and intrigues, exiles and murders, and rapid shifts of sovereignty became the order of the day. The old struggle was revived between the family of Peter the Great and that of his weak half brother Ivan. One of Ivan's daughters secured the coveted throne and ruled as the Empress Anne (1730-1740). She surrounded herself with German friends, introduced German customs, and made Russia a mere satellite of Germany.

Anne even asserted her German friendship by making war upon France, which had long been Russia's established friend and European guide. Both France and Russia tried to decide who should be elected to the throne of Poland. Of course Russia, as Poland's nearest neighbor and frequent antagonist, was much more vitally concerned; but France had long been accustomed to nominating European kings, and was surprised at Russian interference. The Russians besieged the French candidate for the throne in Dantzig. A French army strove to raise the siege but were repulsed with the loss of their general. It was in this fashion that Russia first came into armed conflict with western Europe. Hitherto her warfare had been only with her immediate neighbors, Sweden, Poland, Turkey; now her rough fierce arm began to reach out and make her strength felt everywhere.











RUSSIA EXPLORES THE WORLD

Barling (1996) and Barling et al. (1996) have shown that





## RUSSIA EXPLORES THE NORTH

(Behring Discovers Alaska and Perishes in the Ice-Bound Seas)

*After a painting by the German artist, Albert Rieger*

ANOTHER work which originated with Peter the Great, but which only began to show its results in the days of his feebler successors, was the opening of Arctic exploration. Russia did not even know how enormous were her own territories. The great wastes of northern Asia were so vast and cold that exploration of them upon foot was quite impossible. Peter started explorers out in ships.

The most noted of these Russian explorers was Vitus Behring, who was really by birth a Dane, but who labored for many years in Russia's service. He penetrated to the Pacific coast of Siberia and there built ships for himself and boldly sailed still farther eastward out upon the Pacific Ocean. He was thus the first to discover the sea and strait which lie between Siberia and America, and which bear his name. He even crossed Behring Sea and so discovered the bleak shores of Alaska and took possession of that portion of America's coast for Russia.

Behring perished in the icy wastes which he had spent his life in exploring. He was wrecked on Behring Island and died there in the winter of 1741. Russian fur-traders and sealers followed him and began to win their hard-earned fortunes upon the Alaskan shore which now belongs to the United States.









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## MUNNICH'S RETURN FROM EXILE

(The Death of the Empress Elizabeth Releases Thousands of Exiles From Siberia)

*After a painting by the Russian artist, G. Brolin*

WHEN the Empress Anne died, the strife for the succession broke out afresh. A two-months-old baby boy, a descendant of her own family, the Ivan branch, was placed upon the throne; but a year later the family of Peter gained the ascendancy, and Elizabeth, a daughter of Peter the Great, became the Empress Elizabeth (1741-1762).

Each one of these changes of rule meant tumult, appeals to the soldiery, more or less of murders, and then a train of exiles marching over the weary wastes to Siberia. Thus, the Empress Anne's favorite minister, Biron, was exiled after her death; and his rival, Marshal Munnich, ruled in the name of the baby czar who followed. When Elizabeth seized the crown, Munnich was exiled in his turn, being sent to the bleakest region of Siberia then discovered. There he dwelt in the eternal winter for over twenty years. When Elizabeth died, the next czar, Peter III, reprieved all the political exiles; and the aged Munnich came tottering back out of his poverty and obscurity to be received at first with pity, then with honor. Then, as he proved that he had retained all his old ability, he gradually became again a leader at the court. He and his ancient enemy, Biron, who had also been released, used often to meet with grave courtesy and exchange reminiscences of what each had suffered in Siberia.













## CORONATION OF CATHERINE THE GREAT

(Catherine II, Empress of Russia, assumed this place)

From a manuscript in the library of the British Museum

THE event which thus upon his accession given renewed life and happiness to thousands of Siberian exiles was Peter III, a grandson of Peter the Great by another daughter, Peter III was a weak character who held his throne for less than a year, and is chiefly notable as the husband of his wife, the renowned and remarkable Empress Catherine II, the Great.

Catherine was not really a Russian at all, but a German princess named Sophia. She married Peter early in his life, and then adopted the Russian religion, assumed a Russian name, and became more truly Russian than the natives themselves. She was an extremely able woman, a scholar in several languages, and a pupil of the great Russian philosopher Voltaire. Her adoption of Russian ways was a deliberate effort to win popularity and power in a new home. So well did she succeed that when her drunken husband became exacting, she was really more powerful than he. Peter talked foolishly of divorcing and executing her. She promptly seized the throne, and almost the entire army marched with her, not to her husband. Peter surrendered, was imprisoned, and died within four days. Catherine, who wrote an account of her own life, asserted that he died naturally. We know now that he was murdered.

Catherine had a gorgeous coronation and ruled over Russia for thirty-four years with wisdom and success.





## CORONATION OF CATHARINE THE GREAT

(Catherine II, Having Deposed Her Husband, Assumes His Place)

*From a noted national series of the Russian coronations*

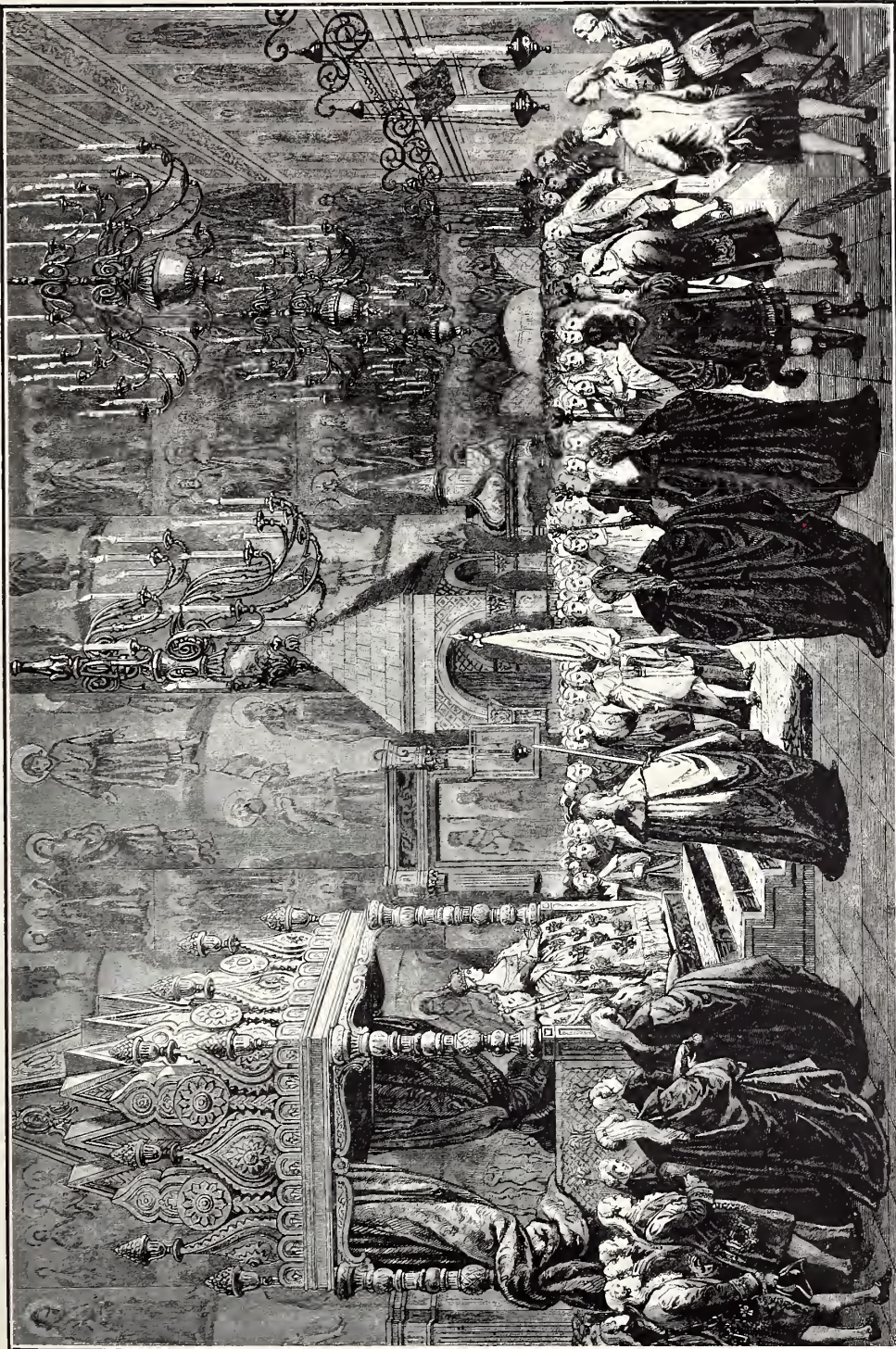
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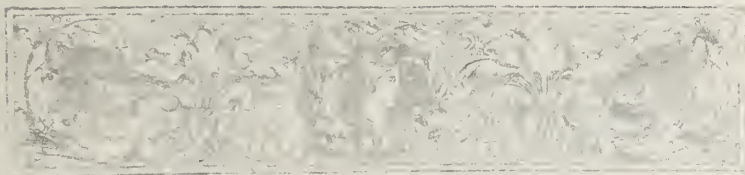




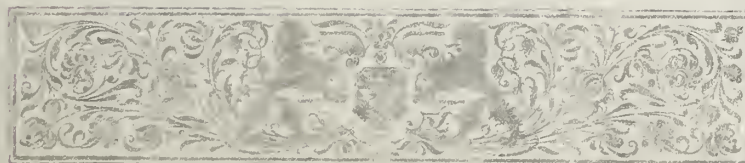








THE LATEST FURSTAL BUILDERS





## THE LATER RUSSIAN RULERS

(Catharine the Great, Her Important Predecessors and Her Descendants)

*Prepared especially for the present work*

FROM this German-Russian, Catharine the Great, are descended all the czars since her time. Through her weak husband, they also claim descent from Peter the Great, whose grandson he was. Catharine the Great was unlike the previous foreign empress, that other Catharine who had been Peter's peasant wife, in that Catharine II was sincerely devoted to Russia's welfare. Morally she lived the loosest sort of life; but every one of the female monarchs of Russia had done that, or been universally accused of doing it. Politically Catharine worked hard for her adopted people. She gave Russia a new and excellent code of laws, and extended its religious freedom. She was a philosopher and a humanitarian. In her memoirs she writes, "If you have for allies, truth and reason, you can extend these to your subjects."

Catharine liked to talk thus of universal freedom, but she was a tyrant at heart. When in her old age the patriots of the French Revolution made real efforts at freedom, she became terrified and suppressed all radical writings in Russia. The country thus became committed to the policy of suppression of the people and absolute power in the ruler. This policy has since been followed by every one of Catharine's descendants who has ruled in Russia.







VII-29

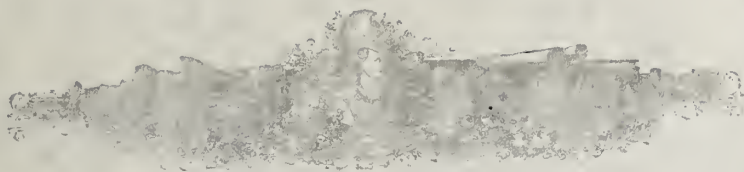
Nicholas I.  
Alexander III.  
Catharine I.

Peter the Great  
Catharine the Great  
Alexander II.

Alexander I  
Nicholas II.  
Peter II.







THE ENTRY INTO THE

(Herald, the Christian leader, Welcomes the K... to his Capital)





## THE ENTRY INTO TIFLIS

(Heraclius, the Georgian Leader, Welcomes the Russians to His Capital)

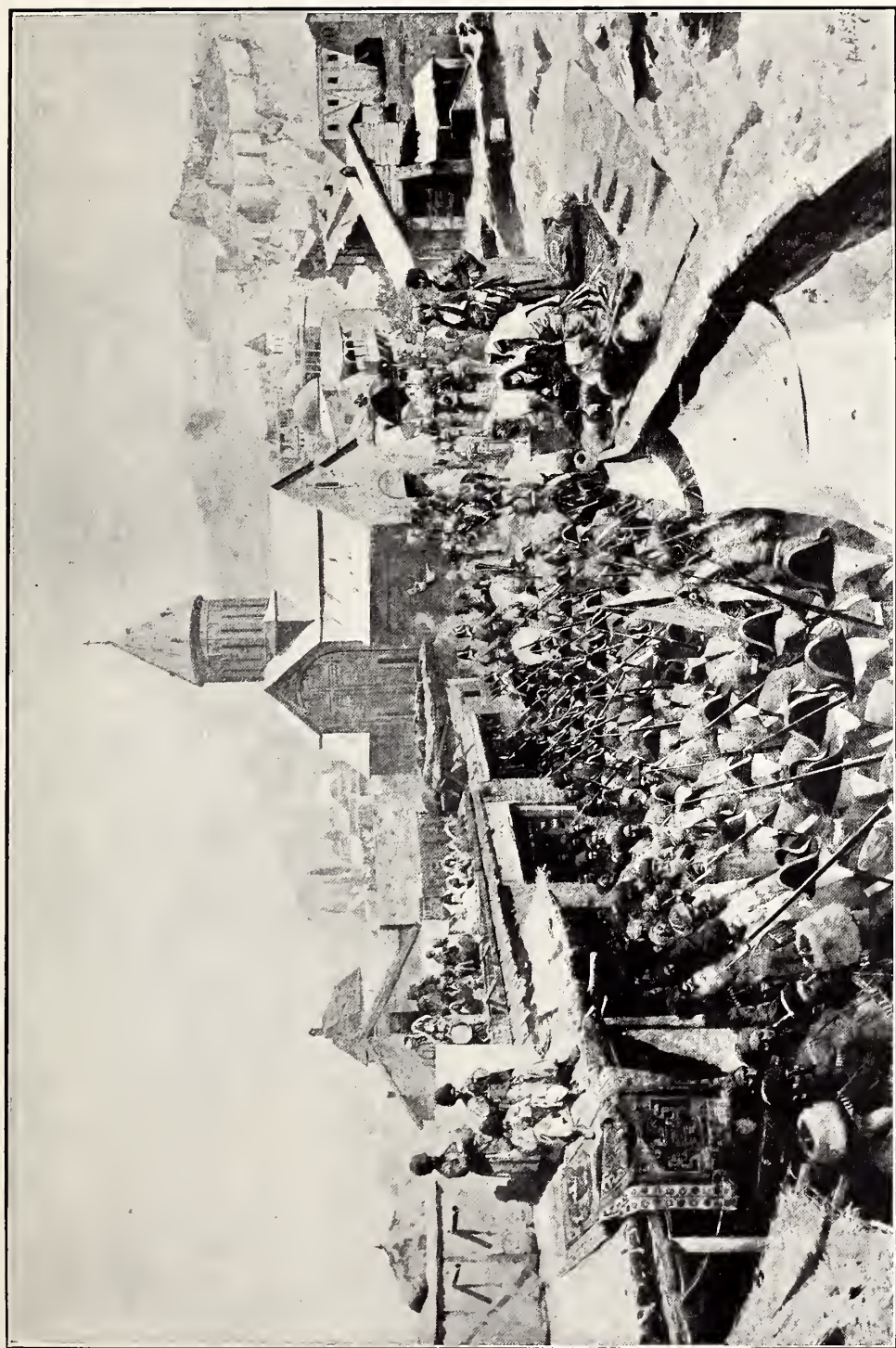
*From the remarkable series of historical paintings by the Russian master, F. Roubaud*

IN a military way the reign of Catharine the Great was especially important. Poland had during the earlier centuries been Russia's chief foe; Catharine took part in and largely engineered the three successive "partitions of Poland" between Russia, Prussia and Austria. All three of these partitions took place in her reign, the last of them completely extinguishing Poland and giving her capital and most of her territory to Russia. Sweden also, which had been curbed by Peter the Great, was completely defeated by Catharine, so that Russia became the chief power of the Baltic Sea. Turkey was so crushed that Constantinople itself was in danger for the first time in centuries.

In Asia also Catharine resumed the advance against Persia which Peter the Great had begun and his feebler successors had abandoned. Georgia, the Persian mountain province of the Caucasus, was in revolt and its chieftain Heraclius appealed to Russia for aid. Following the usual Russian method of helping her neighbors by taking possession of them, Catharine sent an army to assist Heraclius. With Georgian guides it scaled the dangerous passes of the mighty Caucasian Mountains and the Russian flag entered the quaint Georgian capital of Tiflis. After that the Russians never left Georgia, but gradually absorbed it into their empire.















## DEATH OF PAUL I

(The Insane Czar is Killed by His Own Officers)

*From a painting by the German artist, H. Kellenbach*

IN the year 1796 the aged Catharine the Great was found dead in her bed, and her son became czar as Paul I. He was, if not actually insane, at least so erratic of manner that most people believed him to be unbalanced of mind. He was sickly, prematurely old, and very homely. He insisted on always wearing an old three-cornered hat and great boots of ancient Russian pattern. He at first sent his armies to fight the French republicans who were over-running western Europe. Then he made friends with the French leader Napoleon and declared war on England. At home he alienated everybody by extravagant and contradictory laws. Every one he passed in street or palace had to fall upon their knees, rain or shine, and remain thus crouching with bowed head until he passed.

Strangely enough the czar's son Alexander was the reverse of everything that offended in his father; he was shrewd, handsome, kindly and quick-witted.

A patriotic plot was formed to compel Paul to abdicate in Alexander's favor. A party of officers broke into the czar's bed room, nominally to arrest him; but Paul resisted with maniac frenzy. In the struggle the lights were put out, and when they were relit Paul lay upon the floor strangled with an officer's sword belt. He was the last Russian sovereign to perish in a palace intrigue.













## A KINGLY COMPACT

Alexander Medvedev the Prussian Ruler at the Tomb of Their Great King and Vows to Aid Them Against Nago con-





### A KINGLY COMPACT

(Alexander Meets the Prussian Rulers at the Tomb of Their Great King and Vows to Aid Them Against Napoleon)

*From a painting by the Prussian artist, G. Weitsch*

ALEXANDER I, the Russian Emperor who became famous in the struggle of Europe against Napoleon, ascended his throne in 1801, after the murder of his father. Alexander showed himself sincerely desirous of peace; but the constant aggressions of Napoleon drove him at length into war, and Russia's troops suffered with the Austrians the terrible defeat of Austerlitz in 1805. Instead of surrendering, Alexander continued to fight. He visited the equally aggrieved and angered king of Prussia, Frederick William; and these two and the Prussian queen, Louise, had a celebrated interview in the tomb of Frederick the Great of Prussia. Russia had befriended Frederick the Great, saved him indeed from destruction when all Europe attacked him. Now the old alliance was renewed, and by the side of Frederick's tomb the Russian and Prussian rulers vowed to support each other to the very last in warring against Napoleon.

Of course the dangers of this strife fell mainly upon Prussia, since her domains adjoined those of France, while Russia was far distant. So Prussia fought Napoleon, and was completely crushed at Jena. The unhappy Frederick William and his wife had no choice but to flee and appeal to Alexander for his promised aid. The Czar kept his pledge by sending an army into Prussia and there fighting against Napoleon the tremendous drawn battle of Eylau.









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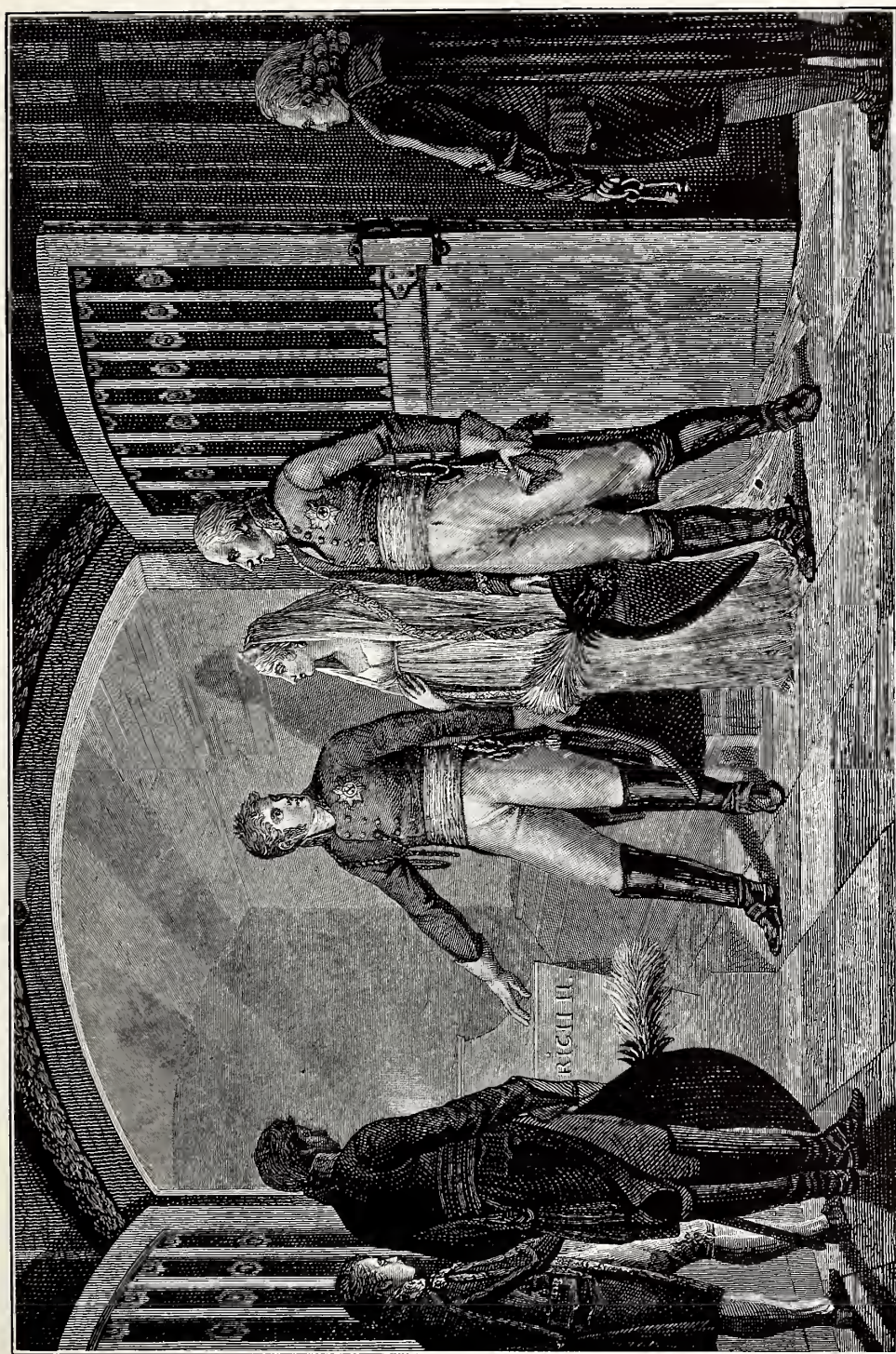
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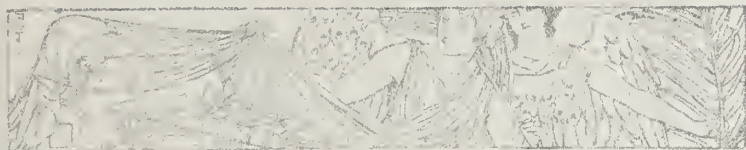












## 17A IVF





## EYLAU

(Napoleon Attacks the Russians, But Wins Only a Few Standards)

*From a painting by the French artist, Lionel Royer*

THE tremendous battle which French and Russians fought at Eylau was a revelation to Napoleon. Hitherto he had despised the Russians; now he learned that they at least knew how to die. The Russians made no attempts at tactics. They simply stood in a huge square and fought. The French with their proverbial gallantry assailed that steady square from every side, but could not break its formation. The Russians would not flee; they simply stood still and fought till they were killed. After a long and bloody day, the French drew off in dismay from the attack, their only triumph being the capture of some standards from exterminated regiments. As for the surviving Russians, they marched off with flags flying and drums beating to more comfortable quarters. Each side claimed the victory. Each had lost some twenty thousand men. Morally, however, the effect of victory was with the Russians, for the unconquerable Napoleon had been checked in his advance. Moreover, Russia could afford to lose twenty thousand men from her inexhaustible supply; France could not.

So keenly did Napoleon feel both the necessity of restoring his prestige and the difficulty of doing it, that in the following year he devoted all his energy to a campaign against the Russians. Again he met them upon Prussian soil, and this time he defeated them positively in the terribly bloody battle of Friedland.













## ALEXANDER CHANGES FRONT

Alexander and Napoleon Meet and Agree to Divide the World Between Them

... and of the ... artist, ...





## ALEXANDER CHANGES FRONT

(Alexander and Napoleon Meet and Agree to Divide the World Between Them)

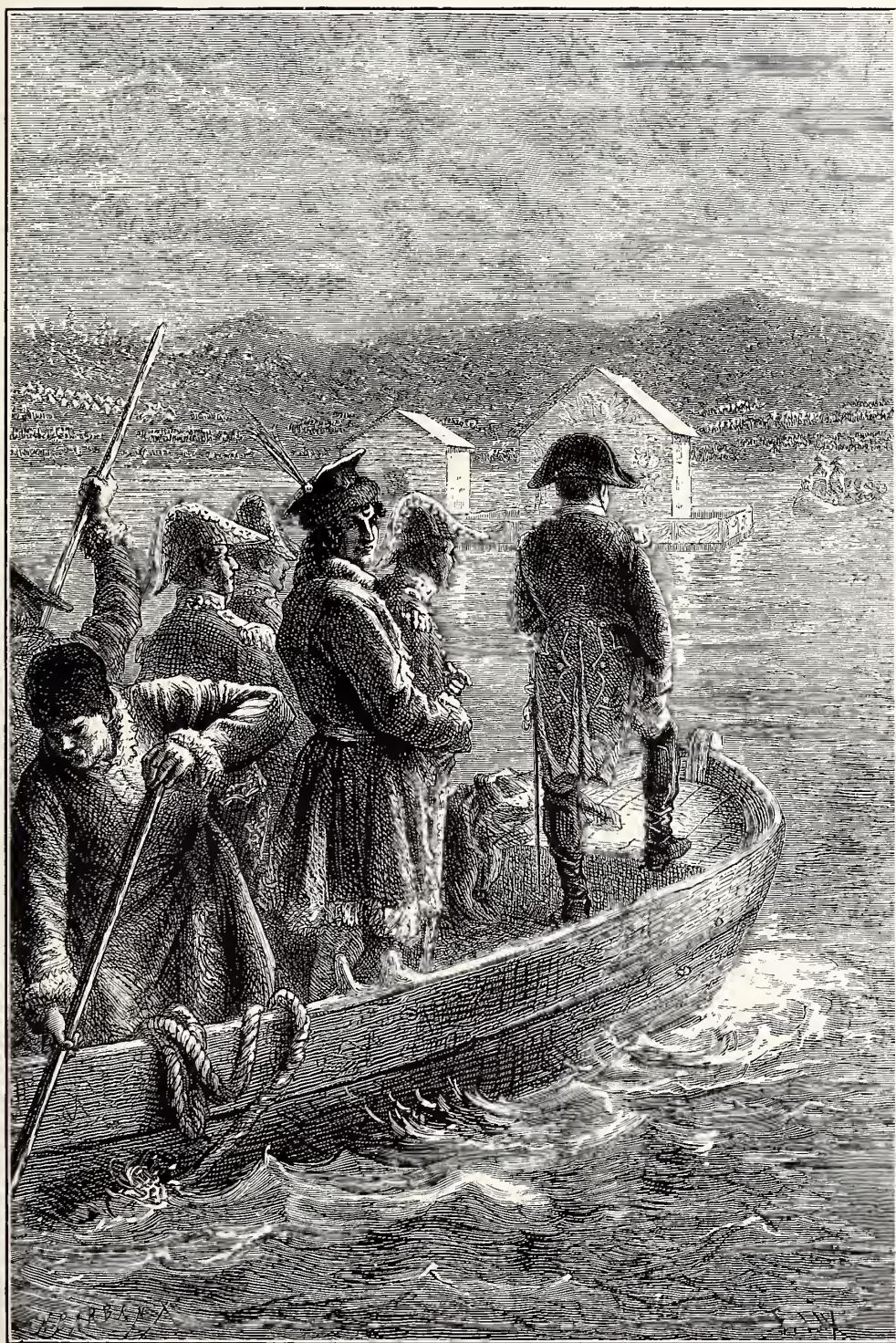
*From a drawing by the French artist, Emile Barbant*

HAVING proved that he could defeat the Russians, Napoleon hastened to make peace with them. His two battles of Eylau and Friedland had been frightfully costly to him in French lives. The defeat at Friedland had driven the Russians out of Prussia back into their own land. Between Prussia and Russia flows the little river, the Niemen, and on its banks the two emperors, Alexander and Napoleon, arranged a conference at Tilsit. Their first meeting was held on a raft moored in the middle of the river, each emperor being rowed out to it in a small boat so that there could be no chance for treachery.

In this celebrated conference the two emperors seem to have agreed to share the world between them. Alexander did not entirely desert his Prussian allies; for he demanded and secured for the Prussian king the restoration of half of his captured dominions. Napoleon, however, retained the other half; and hence Alexander has been accused of breaking his solemn vow to the Prussians. He now became Napoleon's ally, agreeing to help him against England and to leave the French to act as they pleased in western Europe. In return Napoleon allowed Russia to help herself to part of Turkey and to what lands Sweden still possessed east of the Baltic. Thus European Russia assumed upon the map practically the outline of territory which it holds to-day. Russia was also to be free to seize control of all Asia. Russia and France, east and west, were to dominate the world.







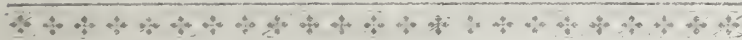






NAPOLEON INVADES RUSSIA

From a view of the French and British  
Napoleon's Satellite Kings Honor the Opening of the Campaign







## NAPOLEON INVADES RUSSIA

(Napoleon's Satellite Kings Honor the Opening of the Campaign)

*From a drawing by the French artist, Emile Bayard*

ALEXANDER'S alliance with France lasted only four years. The territories which Russia had acquired by the treaty with Napoleon were barren and of little practical value; the obligation which she had assumed, of opposing England, was difficult and onerous. Moreover, Napoleon was not an agreeable partner; he was arrogant, exacting and offensive. In 1812 Alexander renounced the French alliance, and joined England and Sweden in declaring war. He knew well what the result must be. England and Sweden were safe from Napoleon because the sea intervened to protect them from Continental Europe. The brunt of war against Napoleon had fallen hitherto upon Austria and Prussia. Now it would fall on Russia.

Five hundred thousand troops were gathered by Napoleon for his great Russian invasion. Alexander gathered as many to resist. But most of the Russian troops were untrained; and the czar wisely resolved to meet the invaders as Peter the Great had met the Swedes a century earlier, retreating before them until cold and starvation should make them easy victims. The fierce Russians liked this policy but little. When at length the weary, half-exhausted French had reached almost to Moscow, the ancient capital, Alexander's generals almost forced him to give battle. As a result the Russians were defeated at Borodino, and the French seized Moscow. The Russians burned what portions of the city they could before abandoning it—burned their capital and left only its ruins for the invaders.















## YAROSLAVETS

(The Russians Drive the French Into a Hopeless Retreat)

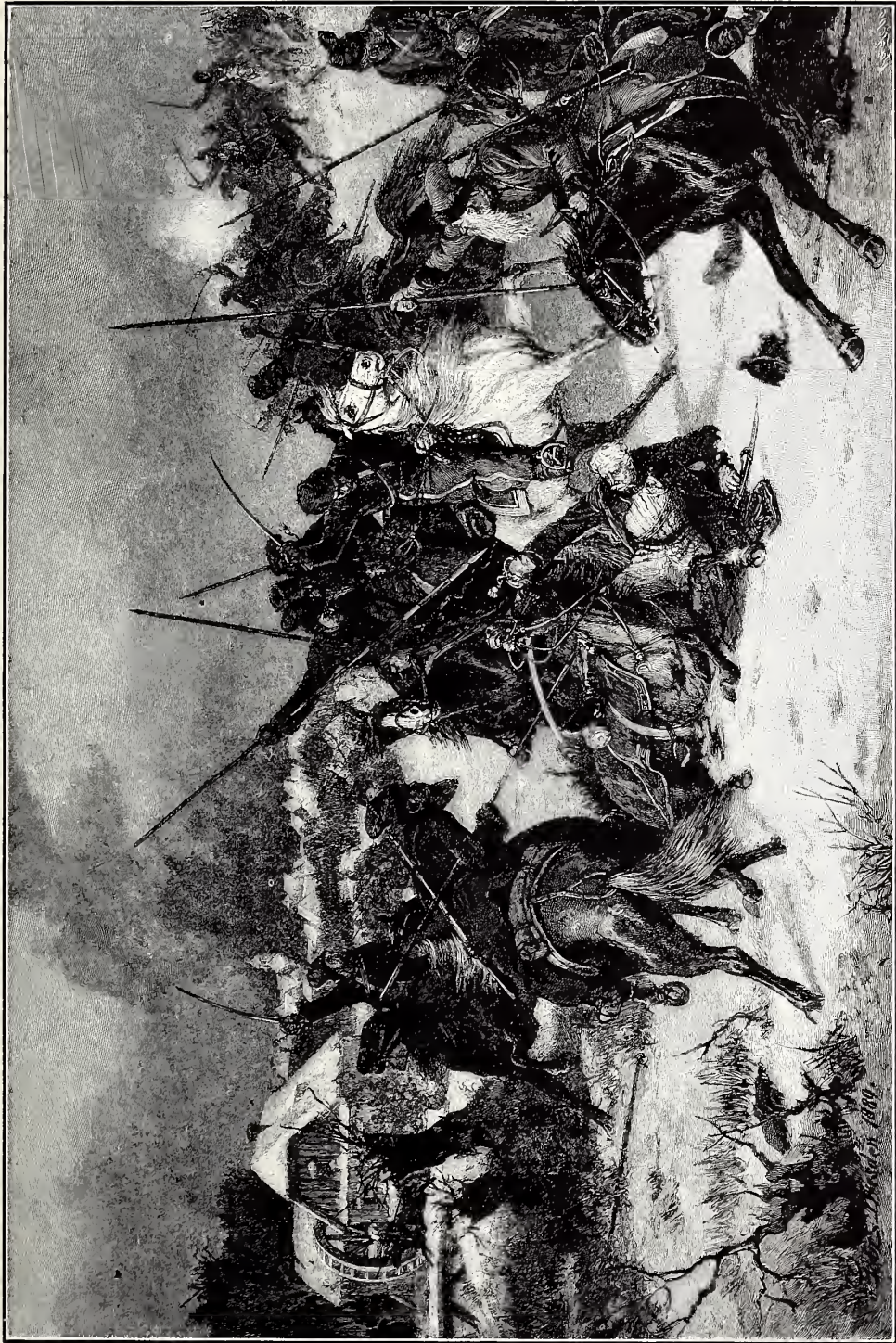
*From a painting in 1889 by the German artist, Theo. von Goetz*

**H**OLDING possession of the captured Russian capital, Napoleon assumed that he had conquered Russia, as before in similar fashion he had conquered Austria and Prussia. Therein lay his error. He was not now fighting a mere king and court, he was fighting against the determined patriotism of a united people. Russian armies, Cossack horsemen, hovered all around him; and in Moscow he could gather no provisions and no fuel against the awful cold of Russia's winter. The conqueror resolved perforce to withdraw his troops to France. He completed the destruction of Moscow and began his homeward march.

Now came the decisive moment. Should the Frenchmen be allowed to withdraw in boastful glory, as they had advanced? At once the hovering Russian armies closed in around them. Napoleon had kept open the line of march by which he had advanced, but his troops had swept the land bare of provisions as he advanced; so he planned to withdraw by a new route, further south, warmer and more fertile. He found the Russians blocking his way at Yaroslavets. They knew as well as he the value of that southern route, and showed him by their desperate fighting that they would contest every inch of it. The village of Yaroslavets was captured by the French and retaken by Cossack horsemen seven times. Then Napoleon yielded the issue, he would retreat by the same line as he had advanced. Such a retreat meant inevitable disaster.











southern seaboard. As soon as this was brought about, he ordered the construction of a Black Sea fleet and the building of several towns, among which was Sebastopol. Connected with these towns was a remarkable hoax which Potemkin played on the Empress.

In the month of January, 1787, Catharine left St. Petersburg on her celebrated visit to the Crimea. She was accompanied by a gorgeous suite, who were unable to stand the fatigues of the journey, and, after travelling a part of the way, had to be left behind. Potemkin had arranged the tour, and the wily flatterer ordered a large number of wooden painted houses set up in each town and village, while thousands of men were hired to act the part of villagers, merchants, and tradesmen, so busily engaged in their different pursuits that the most they could afford to do was to stop just long enough to join in the welcome to the great Empress. Catharine was deceived, and so delighted by these proofs of prosperity and improvements in the countries so recently brought under her rule, that Potemkin was hardly able to stagger under the rewards which she heaped upon him.

It was only a short time after this that war broke out with Turkey, and Potemkin was placed at the head of the army, with a number of skilful assistants. His career was a continued series of victories, and he was on the point of advancing against Constantinople when the Empress abruptly ordered a cessation of hostilities. Potemkin set out to bring her round to his views, and no doubt would have succeeded had he not died on the road, his death being due to his excesses in food, drink, and debaucheries. He was only fifty-two years old, when he ought to have been in his prime. Despite his great abilities he was disliked by the Russians because of his evil habits and his overbearing manners.

At this time the silly Gustavus III. was King of Sweden. His love of display and his ambition to emulate the King of France in magnificence led him to such extravagance that the finances of his country were seriously involved. At the same time, his unpopularity was intensified by attempts to introduce the manners and usages of Versailles. Looking upon Russia as the great obstacle to the restoration of Sweden to its former glory, he declared war against her in 1788, at the time the empire was fighting Turkey. But for the grossest mismanagement, the Swedes must have been successful at least to a dangerous degree, but failure met them everywhere, and Gustavus was finally compelled to make peace, with everything standing just as it was at the beginning. After this he seems to have become completely the creature of Russia. In 1792 he was shot at a masked ball in Stockholm, by an assassin who purposely loaded his pistol with slugs and bits of iron, so as to cause the King intense suffering through the thirteen days which passed before he breathed his



last. With a view of retaining her influence over Sweden, Catharine arranged to marry her granddaughter to the new King, Gustavus IV., who came to St. Petersburg, was betrothed, and all arrangements were completed for the marriage. The day for the ceremony arrived, and the Empress surrounded by her court was waiting to receive the young King; but he did not appear, and after lingering till it was apparent to all he would not come, the guests dispersed.

The explanation of the King's strange behavior was that an hour before he was to appear at court, the contract and terms of alliance were brought to him to sign. When he read the document, he was astonished to find it contained terms of which he had not heard and which he at once declared he never would accept. The principal cause of dispute was on the subject of religion, the Swedes as you know being Protestants and the Russians Greek Catholics.

Gustavus said the princess might profess privately her own religion, as he had no wish to interfere in a matter of conscience, but he could not allow her to have a chapel or clergy in the royal palace, and that in public in all external observances she must conform to the religion of Sweden. Every persuasion was put forth; but the young King was immovable, learning which the Empress refused to meet or have anything further to do with him. Gustavus' heart could not have suffered much, for he married another princess before the year was out.

During Catharine's reign began also the slow advance of Russia across the Caucasus Mountains. On the southern slopes of this giant boundary line between Europe and Asia lies the ancient land of Georgia. Its prince, Heraclius, to protect himself against Persian tyranny from the south, made a treaty with Catharine and admitted a Russian garrison to protect his capital, Tiflis. This was in 1783. The step proved unfortunate for Georgia. The Persians, finding an interval of quiet amid their own quarrels, attacked Tiflis, in 1795. The Russian power was too distant to be of immediate value, and Tiflis was captured and cruelly sacked. Catharine's death saved the Persians from the vengeance she was preparing to launch against them.

Coxe gives the following description of Catharine as he saw her in 1778, when she was at the height of her glory. "The Empress wore, according to her usual custom, a Russian dress; it was a robe with short train, and a vest with sleeves reaching to the wrist, like a polonaise; the vest was of gold brocade, and the robe was of light green silk; her hair was dressed low, and lightly sprinkled with powder; her cap ornamented with a profusion of diamonds; and she wore a great deal of rouge. Her person, though rather below the middle size, is majestic, and her countenance, particularly when she speaks, expresses both dignity and sweetness."

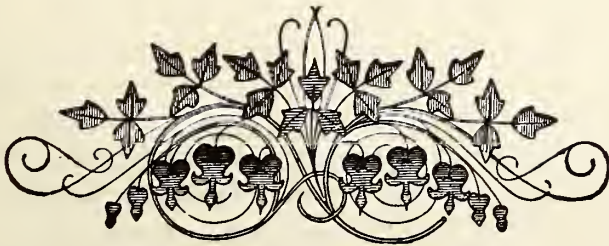
The reign of this remarkable woman was marked by many important events.

It has been shown that Russia acquired a vast area of territory, particularly in the west and south, and gained at last the outlet on the Black Sea that had been coveted by Peter the Great. There was commendable progress in literature also, and Catharine herself appeared in the rôle of authoress. She wrote fairy and moral tales, several trifling comedies, and a Russian adaptation of the "Merry Wives of Windsor." Under her, French philosophy tinged the whole Russian intellectual life. In this, as you will recall, Russia was not alone, for Frederick the Great brought Voltaire to Potsdam and Maupertuis presided over the Academy of Berlin. In Russia this French admiration became a fad. The rich families had their French teachers and hardly any other instructors were permitted in the military schools. The children of the Empress were given the same kind of training. She wrote to Paris for the philosopher Diderot, and paid him a fortune for a few months' labor among her books. During his work she treated him as a friend and equal; toward the close of her reign, however, she became reactionary, as is shown by her correspondence with Voltaire. The cause of this change of sentiment was the fright produced by the excesses of the French Revolution.

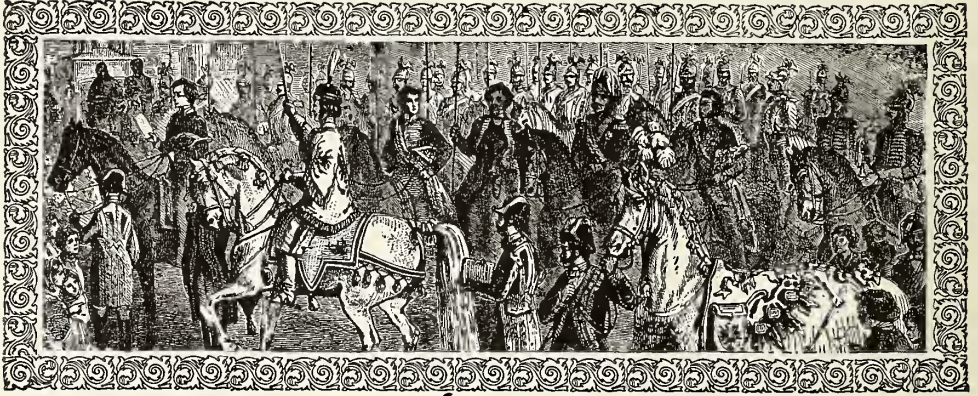
On the morning of November 17, 1796, the Empress Catharine was found lying senseless in her dressing-room. Everything was done to rouse her, but it was impossible, and she breathed her last without having recovered consciousness.

Paul, the only child of Catharine II. and Peter III., was now in his forty-second year. The mother had never shown any affection for him, and he had lived a lonely life, neglected by her from whom he should have received the tenderest care. She was determined if possible to prevent his succeeding her, and it is almost certain that she left the throne to her grandson Alexander.

It is said that an intimate friend of Paul managed to get into the private apartments of the dead Empress, where he found her will and destroyed it. This left the way clear for the succession of Paul I., who was soon to afford the striking picture of one of the greatest empires in the world ruled by a crazy man.



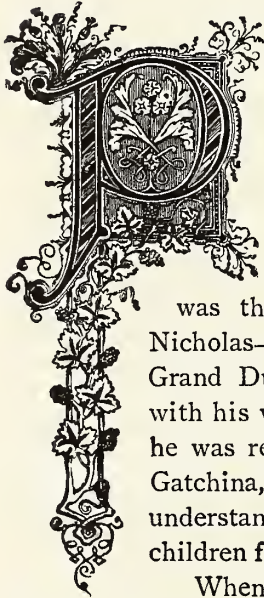




PROCLAIMING THE ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER I

## Chapter CXXV

### PAUL AND ALEXANDER I



PAUL I. (1796–1801), son of the unfortunate Peter, was so ugly in appearance that he would not have his image on the coins of his country, though it would seem that the engravers ought to have known how to flatter him. He had been twice married, but there were no children by his first marriage. His second wife was the Princess Dorothea, of Würtemberg, and was the mother of four sons, two of whom—Alexander and Nicholas—became emperors. The only event of Paul's life while Grand Duke, which is worth recording, was a tour that he made with his wife through Germany, France, and Italy, and from which he was recalled by his mother. She assigned him the palace of Gatchina, thirty miles from St. Petersburg, which, he was given to understand, was to be his permanent residence. She took his children from him and kept them under her immediate care.

When Paul came to the throne, he knew nothing of the character of the people whom he was to govern, nor did he understand anything of the science of government. He was capricious, impulsive, erratic, and, as was said, his mind was unbalanced. Holding the memory of his father in affectionate remembrance, his first act was to see that fitting honors were paid to his remains. They were exhumed from the Monastery of St. Alexander and buried with those of the Empress in the church of the Petropavlovski fortress, after splendid ceremonies. He compelled the supposed assassins of the Czar to follow the coffin, after which he banished them from



the empire. This was followed by the pardon of all Polish prisoners, among whom was the valiant Kosciusko, an act of clemency which led many to hold high hopes of the wisdom of the new Czar's reign.

But it was not long before his unfitness and ignorance, united with his capricious violence, alarmed his friends. He seemed to feel it his duty to undo the existing order of things, and he interfered with every department of business. Privileges that were disagreeable to the nobility and had long been obsolete were revived and enforced. He made it a rule that whenever he met any of them they should instantly get out of their carriages and kneel in the mud to him. Failure to observe this absurd order threw him into a passion and brought unpleasant consequences to the offender.

His admiration for German fashions caused him to introduce innovations in the army which disgusted the soldiers. They had to dress in pigtails and powder their hair. One day when the marching of a regiment displeased him, he ordered it to wheel about and continue straight to Siberia. His orders were obeyed and the soldiers and officers were soon swinging off toward that inhospitable region. They had not gone far, however, before he recalled them.

There is no end to the stories of his childish petulance and whimsical absurdities. Among his follies was the passage of one good law which fixed the succession of the sovereign in the eldest son, instead of leaving it to the will of the sovereign himself. This removed a fruitful source of intrigue and crime. It was because of his unwillingness to have his portrait on the coins of the realm, that the two-headed eagle in time supplanted the likenesses of the Czars which had formerly appeared on them.

He wished his country to remain at peace, but that would have been impossible with a far greater than he upon the throne. You will recall the period as the one which brought forward that terrific scourge of humanity in the person of Napoleon Bonaparte, who played tenpins with kings and emperors and upset the equilibrium of Europe. We need remind you therefore only of those events of his career in which Russia was specially interested.

When the general overturning began, Paul was able to hold for a time a position of neutrality, but this could not last: it was inevitable that he would be caught in the whirl of the maelstrom. He hated the republican form of government in France, and offered a shelter to Louis XVIII. He joined Turkey, England, Austria, and Naples in a coalition against Napoleon, and recalling Suvoroff, whom he had retired in disgrace to his country seat, placed him in command of the army. This able general in 1799 defeated Moreau and entered Milan, after which he turned upon Macdonald, the other French general, advancing from the river Trebbia, and, in a battle that lasted several days, overcame him. Moreau retreated to Novi, where he was superseded by

Joubert. In the battle of August 15, Joubert was killed almost by the first shot fired, and the French were again defeated with great loss by Suvoroff. A short time after this victory, Suvoroff was ordered to advance into Switzerland, and to act in conjunction with another Russian army that had been sent thither. He succeeded in forcing his way through the Alps by the St. Gothard after the loss of many of his men, when, learning that his ally had been beaten, he retreated. As might have been anticipated, Paul was enraged and refused to see him. Suvoroff retired again in disgrace to his estate, where he soon afterward died.

It was now time for the erratic Czar to give a new exhibition of folly, and he did so with a vengeance. He was piqued by the treatment he had received from England and Austria, and, yielding to the blandishments of Bonaparte, turned round and joined him. He and Bonaparte formed a plan for invading India, and Paul drank publicly to the health of the fearful Corsican, and was mean enough to order Louis XVIII. to leave the shelter he had provided for him.

But this grotesque coalition was shattered in the most startling manner conceivable. Paul had made himself so odious to his nobles, who saw the safety of the empire placed in deadly peril by his whims, that they determined to get rid of him at any cost. Their plan was to compel him to abdicate in favor of his son Alexander. When the issue was placed before him he resisted; but the men who called upon him in the Mikhailovski Palace were in grim earnest and settled the question by strangling him to death (March 23, 1801).

This brought his eldest son, Alexander I., to the throne. He was born in 1777, and, as you have been told, his education was conducted by his grandmother, Catharine the Great, and by different tutors. He always showed a strong affection for his mother, was of a humane and benevolent disposition, and as well prepared as was possible to assume the solemn responsibility of ruling his great empire. In 1793 he married Elizabeth, daughter of the Crown Prince of Baden. He must have known of the conspiracy to dethrone his father, but there is no evidence that he had any hint of intended murder, and he was overcome with horror when he learned what had been done.

Let us pause to note the substantial services of Alexander for his country. He was the first emperor to lay the foundation of the national culture and popular instruction on a systematic plan, to bring method and order into the internal administration, to give the industries of his country freedom of development, to improve the foreign commerce, and to rouse a spirit of unity and patriotism among his people.

He either instituted or remodelled seven universities: at Dorpat, Kazan, Charkow, Wilna, Moscow, Warsaw, and St. Petersburg; he erected two hun-

dred and four gymnasiums and normal schools, and more than two thousand elementary schools, while new energy was infused into the scientific institutions in St. Petersburg and Moscow. No sovereign in Europe did as much as he for the circulation of the Bible. This was accomplished through his support of the Bible Society, which, however, was suppressed the year after his death. He rewarded scientific merit both at home and abroad, and expended large sums in printing important works. He bought several valuable scientific collections and brought famous orientalists from Paris to St. Petersburg to promote the study of the Arabic, Armenian, Persian, and Turkish languages. He sent a number of bright young men to travel abroad at his expense, and, by the ukase of 1816, opened the way for the abolition of slavery in the Baltic provinces. He forbade any more gifts of peasants on the crown lands, and, at the very beginning of his career, abolished the secret tribunal which had a method of extorting confessions from political offenders by means of starvation and thirst. One of the most barbarous practices connected with the torture of knouting was that of branding and slitting the nose, both of which Alexander abolished.

Moreover, he had laws enacted that prevented the abuse of power by governors, and many improvements were made in the code of civil law. The institution of an imperial bank, the construction of roads and canals, and the ukase of 1818, which allowed all peasants in the empire to carry on manufactures (previously allowed only to nobles and certain classes of merchants) were of immeasurable benefit to Russia.

Not less notable was the far-sighted policy of Alexander with his foreign commerce. He sent out several expeditions to circumnavigate the world; an embassy to Persia; missions to Cochin China and to Khiva; made treaties with the United States, Brazil, and Spain; naval and commercial treaties with the Porte, and settled the northwestern part of the American continent, now known as Alaska.

Alexander was sincerely desirous of peace, and, in 1801, concluded a convention which closed hostilities with England and made peace with France and Spain. His next step was to join France in negotiations for the indemnification of the smaller states in Germany and Italy, and it was not long before he saw that no reliance could be placed upon the pledges of Bonaparte, who had only his own selfish interests in view.

Napoleon's aggressions continued. He took possession of Hanover and destroyed Holland, and Alexander, losing all patience, joined the coalition of 1805, and was present at the tremendous struggle at Austerlitz on December 2 of that year, when the Russians lost 21,000 men, 133 cannon, and 30 flags. But for the clemency of their conqueror, the troops would never have been



able to return by slow stages to their own country. The shrewd Napoleon wished to win Alexander to his side, and, not only forbade any interference with his retreat, but sent back the prisoners of the Imperial guard, which had surrendered in a body.

Alexander declined to enter into the peace treaty that followed Austerlitz and joined with Prussia in another war against France. He visited the Prussian King, Frederick William, and his celebrated wife, Queen Louise. The royal pair went with Alexander to the vaulted tomb of Frederick the Great, and there the three solemnly pledged themselves to stand together against Napoleon. Then came the disastrous defeat of Prussia at Jena, and the Russian troops proved their valor by fighting on Prussian soil the terrible, bloody, and indecisive battle of Eylau. Napoleon's ablest veterans charged the Russian infantry in vain, and at nightfall the unbroken troops of the Czar withdrew in orderly fashion from the field. The hymn of victory was sung in the cathedrals of the Russians; but the next year Napoleon beat them decisively and indisputably at Friedland, 1807.

Then Alexander and Napoleon met on a raft upon the Russian frontier river, the Niemen, and the Czar signed the treaty of Tilsit, in which he succeeded in preventing the resurrection of the Kingdom of Poland, and secured a mitigation of the hard fate of Prussia. The position of Russia was made more difficult by the hostilities in which she was engaged at the same time with Persia and Turkey.

Alexander was dazzled by the transcendent genius of Napoleon, and, accepting the generous terms of the treaty of Tilsit, he agreed to the French continental system, which was a clear reversal of his foreign policy. In obedience to a secret clause, Russia addressed an ultimatum to England, which being refused, she declared war against her in 1808, and, attacking Sweden, England's ally, wrested away Finland. But the Russian fleet sent to the aid of the French at Lisbon was captured by the British. The disastrous failure of Sweden in the war has been attributed to treachery.

In the autumn of 1808 Alexander and Napoleon met at Erfurt, when it may be said the former represented the empire of the east of Europe, while Napoleon represented the west. It looked as if the two had agreed to divide Europe between them; but the insurmountable obstacle on the part of Alexander was the opposition of his own people, who suffered greatly from the attempt to enforce the continental blockade, which excluded English goods from the Russian ports. Alexander took only a lukewarm part in the war against Austria by France in 1809, although at the conclusion he received a share of the spoils.

The alliance of Russia with Napoleon was so unnatural and so injurious

to her own interests that it could not continue. Alexander had become gradually estranged from the "man of destiny" who had fascinated him. The Czar's resentment was specially roused by the creation of the Duchy of Warsaw, by Napoleon's political intrigues with the Poles, and by the demand that Russia should carry out the continental blockade against England, which brought only distress to the empire. At the proper moment England and Sweden offered an alliance to Russia, and she accepted.

All through the spring of 1812 the highways of France and Germany swarmed with cavalry, artillery, and infantry, converging toward the scene of the stupendous conflict. These soldiers were so admirably equipped and disciplined, and so finely officered, that they roused enthusiasm and were rapturously cheered at every mile of the road to Poland. More than all, Napoleon himself was at the head of this mighty host,—he the greatest military genius since the world began, the conqueror of conquerors, the invincible chieftain, the tread and thunder of those legions made the earth tremble. Glory, victory, fame were the certainties,—defeat the impossible.

So irrestrainable was the ardor in Bonaparte's own dominions that young men of the wealthiest and most distinguished families clamored for a chance to take part in the dazzling scheme of conquest. Bewildering in their triumph as had been the other campaigns, led by the marvellous Corsican, all were to be eclipsed by this stupendous achievement that was to raise France to greater heights of splendor than Rome dreamed of in her days of grandeur and glory.

Long before this human inundation began rolling toward Russia her Government had seen its peril from afar, and had been making silent preparations to dam the deluge that threatened to engulf her. Months previous, most of the army in Turkey had been withdrawn and gathered on the Niemen. Emperor Alexander saw himself being driven remorselessly to the wall, and was determined to die before succumbing.

If the Russian Emperor had strayed for a brief while from his true interests and lost command of his wits, he was eager to atone for it, and the nobles and peasants were as patriotic as he. There was sore need of this enthusiasm, for the issue of the Russian war with Turkey had been doubtful, and hitherto only disaster had followed a grappling with the Corsican ogre. Behind all this high resolution, therefore, was the dread belief that after all the heroic resistance was likely to be in vain. "We will die for our country" was the unalterable resolve, followed by the sad thought, "but that is not likely to save it."

The military authorities, after long and earnest discussion of the universal peril, decided that their best policy was to retreat into the interior, attacking as opportunity offered the flanks and rear of the enemy. The Russian terri-

tory, with its vast forests, scanty cultivation, and enormous extent, was specially favorable to this method of warfare. At the same time numerous strongholds at different points were counted upon to retard the advance of Napoleon.

The Russian plan of campaign, therefore, was to retire slowly, laying waste the country, and taking its population away from the invaders. Powerful parties of well-mounted troops were to hover continually on all sides of the enemy, on the alert to cut off foraging parties, and making strong efforts at the same time to infuse the simple peasantry with religious zeal,—not a difficult thing to do with those who were accustomed to implicit obedience and quick to respond to any appeal to the religious side of their nature. The compact Russian army would thus at all times be in contact with its own friends and the different bases of supplies, but every mile of advance by the enemy would take them that much farther from their depots, from their home, and nearer destruction. The magnitude of the invading host would make it impossible to support itself when in a country from which all sustenance had been withdrawn.

The vastness of the armies commanded by Napoleon is inconceivable. The army which he concentrated in Poland for the invasion of Russia numbered fully 500,000 men, and was joined later by 100,000 more who took part in the campaign. Of these more than 80,000 were cavalry, who were supported by 1,300 pieces of artillery. Some 20,000 carts or chariots of every description followed the army, the total number of horses used in different capacities being 187,000. Despite the vague stories of the Persian and other armies of ancient times, it may be doubted whether there have ever been assembled on this planet so many armed men in one organization. More than one-half were Germans, Poles, Italians, Swiss, and Austrians, who had been scared into serving under the French banners by their terrible leader.

The Russian forces at the beginning of the campaign were much less than the invaders, but as they fell back the defenders were like a rolling snowball which gathers substance, and thus before the close of the campaign the opponents were substantially equal in point of numbers. At the opening of 1812 the total Russian army amounted to 517,000 men, but 70,000 were in garrisons and the rest scattered over an immense area from the Danube to the Gulf of Finland, and from the Niemen to the Caucasus. Levies upon these brought seasoned veterans, as they were needed, to the ranks of those facing the French invaders. The first Russian line consisted of 217,000 men, and the second of 35,000, while the army of Moldavia, 50,000 strong, appeared on the scene in time to take part in the closing operations. Thus the total strength was about 300,000, of whom 50,000 were cavalry, and upward of 800 pieces of artillery were brought into the field. The Government wisely provided thirty-six depots

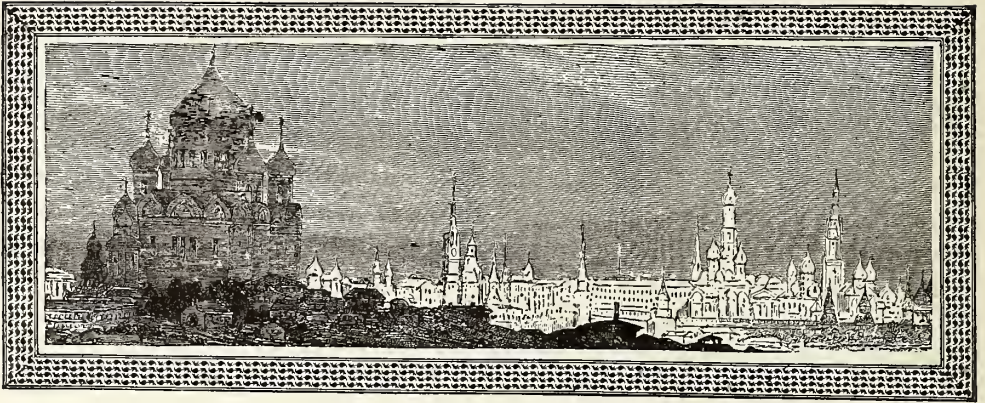


in the provinces, which it was supposed would be the theatre of war, and these proved an invaluable aid to the defenders.

Napoleon at the opening of the campaign divided his troops into three immense masses. The first, of 220,000 men, was under his immediate command, and was intended to crush the first Russian army which consisted of only 127,000. The second French column numbered 75,000, under Jerome, and was intended to overwhelm a Russian force of 48,000; while the Viceroy Eugene Beauharnais, with 75,000, was to throw them between the two Russian divisions and prevent their junction. Besides all these, the French right wing, 30,000 strong, under Schwartzberg, was to be opposed to another Russian column of 40,000, and the left wing of the same strength, under Macdonald, was to act against Riga, where a smaller force awaited his approach. Knowing that two months would suffice for the Russians to bring a quarter of a million more into the field, Napoleon pressed his campaign with the least possible delay and with the utmost vigor.



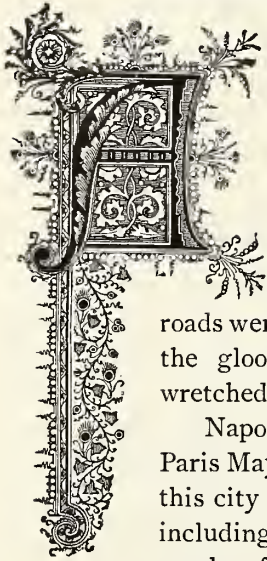
COSSACKS DEFYING THE FRENCH



MOSCOW

## Chapter CXXVI

### NAPOLEON'S FATAL CAMPAIGN IN RUSSIA.



HUNDRED years ago the country on the western border of Russia was mostly flat with extensive marshes in many places. Then, as now, immense forests of pine stretched their interminable length, crossed in places by streams, whose stagnant waters often formed vast swamps and morasses that were a serious obstruction to the advance of a military force. The roads were of arrowy straightness and extended for leagues through the gloomy depths of the forests. The villages were few, wretched, and widely scattered.

Napoleon, accompanied by the Empress Maria Louisa, left Paris May 9, the two bidding each other farewell at Dresden. To this city Napoleon had summoned all the sovereigns of Germany, including the Emperor Francis, and the King of Prussia. In the words of Alison: "No adequate conception can be formed of the astonishing power and grandeur of Napoleon, but by those who witnessed his residence on this occasion at Dresden. The Emperor occupied the principal apartments of the palace; his numerous suite were accommodated around; the august guests of the King of Saxony all looked to him as the centre of attraction. Four kings were frequently to be seen waiting in his ante-chamber; queens were the maids of honor to Maria Louisa. With more than Eastern munificence he distributed diamonds, snuff-boxes, and crosses among the innumerable crowd of princes, ministers, dukes, and courtiers, who thronged



with Oriental servility around his steps. Whenever he appeared in public, nothing was to be heard but praises of his grandeur and magnificence. The vast crowd of strangers, the superb equipages, the brilliant guards which were stationed in all the principal parts of the city, the constant arrival and departure of couriers from or toward every part of Europe, all announced the king of kings, who was now elevated to the highest pinnacle of earthly grandeur."

Not a shadow of misgiving clouded the future of Napoleon. As he declared, he not only commanded the immense and invincible forces of France, Italy, Germany, the Confederation of the Rhine and Poland, but the two monarchies which hitherto had been the most powerful allies of Russia against him were arrayed under his banners, while he was hopeful of making Turkey and Sweden his auxiliaries. The triumph of the French Emperor seemed absolutely certain, and Madame de Staël has declared that it was the universal opinion that when Napoleon was at Dresden, surrounded by all the sovereigns of Germany and commanding an army of 500,000 men, it appeared impossible, according to all human calculation, that his expedition should not succeed.

But the very magnitude of the armies of invasion raised insurmountable obstacles to its success. Not the least striking phase of Napoleon's genius was his perfect mastery of details. Nothing, however minute, escaped his penetrating eye; but there is a limit to human possibilities. Strive as hard as he might, he could not prevent wholesale pillaging by his soldiers. Immense and far-reaching as was the provision he had made for his troops, it could not, in the nature of things, be sufficient. He was forced to make requisitions for horses, carts, and oxen upon the peasants, who vainly protested against the spoliation, so that they who expected deliverance found themselves in a worse condition than before. He posed as the deliverer of Poland, but the wealthiest families in Warsaw could not obtain enough food to satisfy their gnawing hunger. Pillage became a necessity, and the great car of Juggernaut rolled on crushing the multitudes under its merciless wheels.

No man ever had more magnetism than Napoleon, nor did any military leader ever know better how to win the blind, headlong devotion of his soldiers. While reviewing his troops just before reaching the Niemen, he passed through the ranks and inquired as to their wants. He recalled to his grim veterans the glories of the Pyramids, of Marengo, of Austerlitz and Jena, and assured the conscripts that equal glories awaited them. Had they any complaints to make? Did they receive their pay regularly? Were any wants unsatisfied? Was there anything he could do to prove his love for them? What commissions were vacant and who were the most worthy to fill them? Pausing in the centre of a regiment, he would inquire as to the age, services, and wounds of certain soldiers, and decorate them with the cross of the Legion of Honor taken



from his own breast. When the standards of the famous regiments were borne past, blackened with powder and torn with shot and shell, he took off his hat and bowed reverently to them. His men became frenzied in their enthusiasm and were eager to march to death as if "to a festival."

The immense force of more than 200,000 men and 100,000 horses approached the Niemen on the 23d of June, just as day was breaking, and with the stream hidden by the great forest of Pilwiski, the "Little Corporal" rode out on horseback to reconnoitre the banks. Before night he issued his stirring proclamation:

"Soldiers! the second war of Poland has commenced: the first was terminated at Friedland and Tilsit, when Russia swore an eternal alliance with France and war with England. Now she violates her oaths. She refuses to give any explanation of her strange conduct till the French eagles have repassed the Rhine, leaving our allies at her discretion. Fate drags her on; let her destinies be fulfilled! Does she imagine we are degenerated? Are we not still the soldiers of Austerlitz? We are placed between dishonor and war; our choice cannot be doubtful. Let us then advance, cross the Niemen, and carry the war into her own territory. The second Polish war will be as glorious as the first; but the peace we conclude shall be its own guarantee, and put an end to the fatal influence which for fifty years Russia has exercised in the affairs of Europe."

The listening soldiers were thrilled, and the signal for advance was given. The forests and hollows vomited their seemingly endless columns of men, who pushed silently on, and, halting at the edge of the river, lay down and peered through the gloom at the other shore, impatient for the order to cross and attack the enemy.

Shortly after midnight Davoust's corps sprang to their feet and passed over the river, its advanced guard taking possession of Kowno. As the bright summer sun rose the enormous array began filing past the Emperor, who came out from his tent placed on an elevation, within a short distance of the river, and with the light of battle glowing in his face bowed to the wild cheering of the tens of thousands who filed past. Standing thus, he saw 200,000 men, including 40,000 horses, move before him ere the sun set, but two more days were required for the passage of all the troops.

The cavalry under Murat took the lead, and the other divisions, under the Viceroy Eugene and Jerome, passed the river at Pilyony and Grodno.

Nothing could shake the resolution of the Russians to fight to the death in order to turn back this appalling tide of invasion. The superior numbers and discipline of the invaders made it madness to offer any serious resistance until the ranks of the enemy had been thinned by the casualties that must accom-

pany such an advance. The wisdom of this decision speedily showed itself. The sultriness that attended the crossing of the Niemen was followed by a violent tempest that fell with disastrous effect upon the horses, which were unable to procure provender in the sterile deserts and forests through which they plodded. Lack of food and the incessant beating of the rain caused the death of no end of the animals. It is said that 10,000 carcasses strewed the road between the Niemen and Wilna, where one hundred and twenty cannon and five hundred caissons were left for lack of the means of transport. Before a single shot was fired, the hospitals of Wilna and the villages of Lithuania were filled with 25,000 sick and dying Frenchmen.

The steadily retreating armies were under the personal command of the Emperor Alexander. Such was the technical fact, but like most rulers he had no fitness for such a responsibility. He had, however, eminent and able men at his elbow, and was wise enough to follow their advice. Chief of these was General Von Phull, a Prussian by birth and an officer of marked ability whose counsel was carefully heeded. Barclay de Tolly, the minister of war, was one of the ablest generals ever produced in Russia, and conducted the retreat from the camp at Drissa to Borodino.

The principal Russian army left Wilna on the 28th of June, and Napoleon reached it on the same day. There he committed the fatal error of remaining for seventeen days,—a delay all the more unaccountable since it was in violation of his usual energy, when none knew better than he the necessity of pushing his advance with the utmost promptness. Every hour's delay was a loss to his diminishing armies and a gain to the Russians, who thus secured time in which to obtain reinforcements and to perfect their plans.

It would be interesting had we time to follow the numerous and complicated manœuvres of the enormous forces which opposed each other. The Russians displayed great skill, while more than one delay on the part of Napoleon brought to naught the plans he had formed. It proved utterly beyond his power to suppress the pillaging, disorder, and confusion, and the consequent fatalities became a serious check to his advance thus early in the campaign. The Russians continued flocking to arms in answer to numerous fervid appeals, and their strength grew as that of the invaders waned. Reaching Moscow with his army, Alexander called a solemn convention of the nobles and merchants on the 27th of July. Immense contributions of money were cheerfully made to the cause of defence, and by a unanimous vote a levy of ten in one hundred of the male population was made, the merchants and nobles pledging themselves to clothe and arm them at their own expense. It was believed that if the other parts of the empire imitated this action (which they did), it would bring half a million men to the ranks. Thus the forces of the defenders

were greatly strengthened and the additions had much to do with the final success of the campaign.

Having done all in his power, the Emperor returned to St. Petersburg, reaching there on the 15th of August, and on the next day published an edict ordering an additional levy in all the provinces not actually the seat of war. All these addresses and orders were tinged by a profound religious tone, which was the most effective of all appeals that could be made to the sombre Russians. The gay, thoughtless, atheistical officers of the French army found rare sport in ridiculing these addresses, but Napoleon was too wise not to read their effect upon the masses, and it caused him considerable misgiving.

Several hot skirmishes resulted in favor of the Russians, and the news of the continual additions that were made to their forces, with the constant falling away of his own, led the French Emperor to discuss with his military council the question of a further advance into the empire. Several of the ablest generals were emphatic in condemning such advance; but Napoleon declared that it would be as fully as disastrous to retreat as to go on, and that the first decisive victory would compel Alexander to accept whatever terms the conquerors chose to give.

It may be said that in the same hour that the decision was thus made to advance, the Russians determined to take the aggressive. The retreat had continued for three hundred miles, and the effect on the morale of the troops was bad. It was estimated that the French had sustained a loss of a 100,000 men, and the rank and file of the Russian army could see no reason for thus eternally falling back before a force which they did not believe was more powerful than their own. The Russian loss had been hardly one-tenth that of the invaders. Alexander, much against his will, took the command from his favorite officer and gave it to Kutusoff, unquestionably an able general, who, being a Russian by birth, was the idol of the army. He saw the necessity of a pitched battle and made his preparations for a desperate stand at Borodino, on whose result would depend the fate of Moscow.

The forces were about equal, but the French were much the superior in cavalry and in the quality of their troops. They numbered 133,000, of whom 30,000 were cavalry, and they had five hundred and ninety cannon in the field. The Russian force was 132,000, with six hundred and forty pieces of artillery; but among their troops were several thousand militia who had never been in battle.

The struggle at Borodino, seventy miles from Moscow, was fought on the 7th of September, and was one of the most desperately disputed in history. Of the 240,000 engaged, more than 70,000 were killed and wounded. The Russians retreated the next day, but in perfect order and without the French



daring to molest them. The former have always held therefore that this battle was a victory, and, in 1839, they raised a fine mausoleum on the battlefield. But the honor must be conceded to the French, for they not only remained on the field, but resumed unopposed their advance upon Moscow. The victory, however, cost them dear, and had the Russian commanders known what a staggering blow they had dealt the enemy, they could perhaps have overwhelmed them by following up the advantage.

On the other hand, the severe losses sustained by the Russians convinced them that destruction would follow another engagement, and, though this never-ending retreat greatly depressed the defenders of the empire, yet its material injury to the enemy far outweighed such disadvantage. The universal expectation was that a determined stand would be made in front of Moscow, but the stern policy of the Russian commanders demanded the abandonment of the ancient capital.

Consternation spread among the inhabitants when this decision became known, and for a time they were struck dumb by the awful calamity descending upon them. Then, giving way to a wild panic, they began scrambling out of the city, so that within a few days 300,000 had scattered over the surrounding plains, there to resume the nomadic life of their ancestors. When the dejected Russian troops entered the city, it looked as if they were attending the obsequies of Russia itself. The gloom was so profound, so universal, so crushing, that life had lost its attraction.

Meanwhile, the French legions were bearing down upon the doomed city with the relentless tread of fate. About midday, on the 14th, the advance guard from an elevation in the highway caught their first sight of Moscow. In the soft September sunshine, the minarets, the two hundred churches, and the crests of a thousand palaces gleamed like a vision of fairyland. Instinctively the squadrons halted and gazed upon the scene. Then the cry "Moscow! Moscow!" rang through the ranks and ran back till it reached the Emperor's Guard. Breaking ranks and cheering, they rushed forward, with Napoleon galloping in the midst of them, as impatient as they. His stern face lit up with delight, when he checked his horse, and silently surveyed the scene, the only silent man among the shouting and cheering thousands.

The pause was brief, when Murat at the head of the cavalry rode to the gates and concluded a treaty for the evacuation of the city. Then the French troops entered and found themselves treading the deserted streets of the captured metropolis. Only the tramp of the multitudinous footsteps, and the hoof-beats of thousands of horses echoed on the pavements and through the palaces. Here and there a glimpse of a pair of black eyes was caught, as man or woman furtively peeped out at the swarm below, but hardly a human being was seen

where but a short time before a vast city hummed and throbbed with the tumult of life.

All day long Napoleon confidently awaited the coming of a deputation from the authorities to beg his indulgence, but not a solitary person presented himself. The conqueror sat wondering and puzzled, until he could not longer escape the truth that the population of Moscow had vanished. Mounting his horse, he rode into the city, and took up his quarters in the ancient palace of the Czars, with his officers as his companions.

Still the Emperor felt no suspicion of the terrible meaning of this wholesale withdrawal; but Russia had determined upon a sacrifice such as the world has never known. To the gates of his country palace the governor had affixed the following notice to the invaders: "During eight years I have embellished this country house, and lived happily in it, in the bosom of my family. The inhabitants of this estate to the number of seven thousand burn it at your approach, in order that it may not be sullied by your presence. Frenchmen! at Moscow I have abandoned to you my two houses, with their furniture, worth half a million roubles; here you will find nothing but ashes."

The governor had with his own hands set fire to his country palace. When he left Moscow he took with him all the fire engines and every appliance intended to arrest a conflagration. Combustibles were distributed profusely, so as to aid in the spread of the flames, and a large force was ordered to remain behind and apply the torch, as soon as their countrymen were out of the way.

The French soldiers wandered through the streets, impressed by the Gothic magnificence, the brilliant decoration, and the leafy wealth of vegetation. They passed to and fro at will, but for hours saw no human beings besides themselves. They were traversing a city of the dead. A softened witchery was thrown over all by the silvery moonlight from the unclouded sky, and the impressionable French soldiers responded to the weird influence of the scene.

When the night was further advanced, many of the officers broke into the principal mansions in search of sleeping quarters. Everything was found in perfect order, as if the occupants expected to return at any moment. Even the work of the ladies remained on the stands and tables, and the keys were in the wardrobes. After a time, timid footsteps were heard on the lower stairs and the slaves, white and trembling with fear, emerged from the cellars and showed the way to the sleeping apartments. All that they could say in answer to questions was that their masters and mistresses had fled and they were left alone in the houses.

There had been a fire on the night of the 13th which consumed a number of buildings, but it was only a notice of what was coming. At midnight, on the 15th, those who were awake saw a bright light rapidly growing in the

northern and western parts of Moscow and not long after the guard at the Kremlin discovered that the fire was rapidly approaching. The wind was not only strong, but changeable, and carried the flames toward every point of the compass, while new fires were continually breaking out. The air was full of flying sparks and fragments which soon began falling on the roof of the Kremlin. There were no appliances with which to check the danger, and had there been, nearly all the soldiers were too sodden with drunkenness to raise a hand.

The fire burned with greater or less fierceness during the night and following day, but the greatest devastation was on the nights of the 18th and 19th. The force which the Russians had left behind to attend to this work did it thoroughly, and on the nights mentioned the whole city became one stupendous seething conflagration, which lit up the heavens with a glare that enabled officers two or three miles distant to read the despatches sent to them. There were immense stores of oil, resin, tar, spirits, and other combustible materials, which gave a fury to the blaze that nothing could have subdued. The rarefaction of the air turned the wind into a hurricane and the roar, heat, and stunning turmoil awed even those who were accustomed to the terrors of battle. It was like a vision of the Day of Judgment.

The next day brought strange and pitiful scenes. Swarms of people who had taken refuge in cellars and vaults, where their presence had been unsuspected, poured out, bearing little children in their arms, some with two or three terrified babes clinging to their backs. The approach of the fire had driven out these people, some of whom rushed blindly to and fro, striving to save a few of their valuable heirlooms or treasures. Many of the bundles caught fire while their owners were racing back and forth and had to be flung to the ground, while in more numerous instances the miserable wretches were robbed by the drunken soldiery. Tottering old men and women, unable to walk, were pushed hurriedly in wheelbarrows by their children, the blistered faces and singed beards showing how narrowly some of the patriarchs had escaped the most cruel of deaths.

The uncontrollable flames raged for thirty-six hours, and then when more than nine-tenths of Moscow had become ashes and smouldering embers, they ceased for want of something to feed upon. The ancient capital was captured, but it was a tomb.

Napoleon was so enraged that he ordered the shooting of all the Russians engaged in spreading the fire. He clung to his palatial quarters in the Kremlin in the hope that they could be saved. But the time came when they also burst into flame, and a hurried flight was necessary. Several of his suite were scorched, and for a time all were in danger. They succeeded, finally, in



reaching safe quarters on the outside, where they could watch the spread of this most appalling conflagration of modern times.

No pen can picture the horrors into which the miserable beings who could not abandon their homes, were thrown by this act of unparalleled sacrifice. Impoverished and dazed, they wandered among the smoking ruins in search of some missing parent or child, unable to identify the blackened remains that came to sight. On such occasions soldiers became no better than demons, and the robberies, outrages, and barbarities suffered by the women, children, and indeed all the inhabitants could not have been surpassed by a band of marauding Apaches. When General Sherman characterized war as "hell" he fitly named it, as was proved at Moscow, as well as at thousands of other places, before and since those awful September days and nights of 1812.

Far away the Russian army continued its rhythmic tramping at night by the glare of their blazing capital, which illumined the heavens for many a league in every direction. Their generals were able to maintain far superior discipline to that in the camp of their enemies; but what a price had been paid by the people for their brief check to the invaders! Soldiers themselves, they could well imagine the scenes that were taking place in their burning metropolis, and they felt the stunning effect of the most fearful blow the empire had ever received. The indignation, the rage, the resolution to avenge the unspeakable outrage burned as fiercely in their breasts as did the flames behind them.

The Russian commanders displayed the best of generalship in the movements that followed. They drew near their waiting reinforcements, covered the richest provinces in the country, secured supplies, and threatened the communications of the enemy. The peace with Turkey released most of the Russian army in Moldavia, and the treaty with Sweden, concluded in August, enabled the Czar to withdraw the regular forces in Finland, for the reinforcement of the main army that was combating Napoleon in front, and aiming to cut his communications in the rear. All this took place while Napoleon was complacently resting among the ruins of Moscow. A formidable army of a hundred thousand men were converging from the shores of the Baltic and the banks of the Danube toward Poland with the purpose of cutting off the French retreat to western Europe. Had it been practicable to carry through these mighty campaigns, Napoleon and his entire army must have been annihilated or captured.

Many of the biographers of the Corsican believe that the campaign in Russia proved that his masterly powers had begun to wane. He was not capable of standing the tremendous mental and physical exertion which at Austerlitz enabled him to laugh at fatigue. The wearied body reacted upon the brain,

which probably had partly exhausted itself from the prodigious draughts upon it. God has wisely set a limit to man's capacities, and the hero of so many astounding victories was never fully himself again. The venture which he made into Russia was itself a proof of this, while three years later at Waterloo the decline of his genius was still more marked.

Since Moscow was a tomb, it would seem that Napoleon should not have hesitated to press on to other cities lying near enough to reach, or that he should have begun his withdrawal from the empire. But he believed that the destruction of Moscow would compel Alexander to offer terms, and that the armies before him were so terrified that they would be glad to accept any condition which promised to save them from the invincible invaders. Accordingly he returned to the Kremlin, which had mostly escaped the flames, and sent off a messenger to Kutusoff with a proposal for an armistice. The Russian general, as he afterward explained, kept up the semblance of negotiation in order to gain time. The determination of himself and countrymen not to yield was never stronger than at the very time when Napoleon was confidently counting upon such yielding.

The fearful Russian winter was rapidly approaching, and the passing weeks brought no sign from the Czar, to whom the armistice proposals had been referred. Napoleon was compelled to consider the probability that his offer would be refused, and to decide what to do in the event of hostilities being resumed. The obstacles to the success of every plan that was proposed led him to abandon each in turn, and still to cling to the hope of receiving the surrender of his enemy, who still remained silent, and pushed his preparations with all possible vigor.

Napoleon refrained from providing his army with winter quarters, nor could he bring himself to accept the alternative of retreat,—an inevitably fatal blow to his prestige. He would no longer be looked upon as the invincible leader of armies; a retrograde movement would be the first decisive step toward his downfall. "A retreat will appear a flight," said he, "and Europe will re-echo with the news. What a frightful course of perilous wars will date from my first retrograde step! I know well that Moscow, as a military position, is worth nothing; but as a political point its preservation is of inestimable value. The world regards me only as a general, forgetting that I am an Emperor. In politics you must never retrace your steps; if you have committed a fault, you must never show that you are conscious of it. Error steadily adhered to becomes a virtue in the eyes of posterity."

But the deadly Arctic weather was steadily drawing near, though October opened unusually mild. What seemed a favor could not fail, however, to prove the reverse; for the gentleness of the month lured the French army into

a delusive security. Winter was certain to come before they could cross the inhospitable wastes behind them, and even now it was too late to escape its full vigor. Through pillaging and plundering, the troops had lost their fine discipline; they were mostly a drunken, rioting, savage mob, who while wearing the costliest furs and silks, could find no food except rotting horseflesh with which to fight off the pangs of starvation. The Russians were glad to see their enemies thus lingering with a sense of security, which must soon have a frightful awakening. The advanced posts did not hesitate to assure those confronting them, that they were doomed. "In a few weeks," said they, "you will not be able to hold your muskets in your hands, for they will become icicles, and you will freeze into so many blocks of wood. Have you not room for tombs in your own country that you should come this far to leave your bones in our snowy wastes?"

These taunts produced their effect. A gloomy feeling spread among the French troops. The bravest officers had been emphatic from the first that it was unwise to remain a single day after the destruction of Moscow, and some, including Ney, had opposed coming so far even as that. No one could fail to view the approach of winter with foreboding. Napoleon knew that, if his negotiations with the Russian commander failed, he had no choice left but to retreat to Poland. A Russian winter was an enemy which he did not dare to face, even with the bravest French army that ever bore his eagles to victory.

The mild weather of October soon grew chilly, and about the middle of the month there were flurries of snow in the air. A booming of Kutusoff's cannon awoke the curiosity of Napoleon, who, when he inquired the cause, was told that it was to celebrate the capture of Madrid by the English and Spanish troops. In a proclamation to his soldiers the distinguished Russian general uttered the startling prophecy that was soon to be verified: "The hand of Omnipotence presses on Napoleon. Moscow will be his prison or his tomb; the grand army will perish with him; France will fall in Russia."

The time speedily came when Napoleon saw he could hesitate no longer. He had already waited too long, and not another hour must be lost. Orders were issued for the purchase of 20,000 horses; for the care of the sick and wounded, and it was commanded that the troops should be provided with forage and subsistence for a long march. A mockery, since there was no human means of obtaining forage and subsistence.

When Napoleon, on October 19, turned his back upon Moscow, he was at the head of 103,000 combatants, 600 cannon, and 2,000 military vehicles. He had added 10,000 to his infantry while at the Kremlin, by the recovery of the wounded and the arrival of reinforcements; but his cavalry, once so formidable, was decimated and the horses of the artillery were barely able to



drag the guns. Behind this formidable army straggled an endless train of wagons and prisoners, laden with plunder from the destroyed city. The camp followers numbered 40,000 of various nations and both sexes, arrayed mostly in gaudy finery, but with empty stomachs. Standing in the middle of this immense train, a mounted horseman could not see either end of the motley horde. Artillery, caissons, baggage-wagons, and carts were mingled in inextricable confusion and the route was strewn with enough cast-away plunder to enrich a nation.

As soon as news reached Kutusoff of the retreat of the French army from Moscow, he broke up his camp and started in pursuit at the head of 80,000 troops and 30,000 Cossacks, the latter of whom formed the most fearfully effective engine of destruction that could be launched against the invaders. He took a line parallel to the French and headed for the strongest position on the line of retreat, hoping to reach and occupy it in advance of Napoleon. The force left by the latter in the Kremlin blew up a part of the edifices on the approach of a Russian column, and then withdrew.

Napoleon's first attempt was to retreat by a new and more southerly route where his troops might find forage from a district yet undevastated. The advance parties of both armies reached this road at substantially the same time, and the conflict that followed was indescribably fierce, the little town of Yaroslavets being taken and retaken seven times. In the end the French drove out the Russians and opened a way for their artillery. The loss was about five thousand on each side, and Napoleon was startled by the desperate bravery displayed by the Russians. His success was virtually a defeat, for he was compelled either to continue fighting his way southward at an overwhelming disadvantage, or to fall back by the same wasted route over which he had advanced. Several reconnoissances convinced him that the latter alternative was the only possible one, and it is said the discovery was so agitating to him that for some time none of his attendants dared go near him.

At daybreak the next morning, while he was picking his way through a confused mass of baggage, wagons, and artillery, a powerful force of Cossacks thundered down upon the imperial escort, in a dash to seize a park of forty pieces of artillery near the headquarters of Napoleon. The Emperor never had a narrower escape from capture. The troops in immediate attendance on him were ploughed through and overturned by the terrible lances of the Cossacks, numbers of them passing the Emperor, who was not recognized in the mêlée, or assuredly his career would have been ended then and there. The arrival of reinforcements checked the Cossacks, who seized all the guns but were able to make off with only eleven.

A council of the Emperor and his leaders that night led to the decision that

nothing was left to the grand army but to retreat. It was a bitter and humiliating conclusion for Napoleon, but he acquiesced, saying that all had been done that was possible, and nothing remained but to look to the safety of the army.

If one wishes to gain an unspeakable horror of war, he has but to read the history of the French retreat from Moscow. Miseries, sufferings, and death in its most torturing form accompanied the march of the Grand Army through a country that it had itself turned into a desert. The Cossacks hung like wolves on the outskirts of the colossal mob, cutting off the parties that vainly scoured for food, in a region where not so much as a blade of grass was growing. Often the barbaric horsemen made dashes upon the army itself, capturing guns and horses that were too weak to walk, and gathering in cannon which the tottering fugitives were too feeble to drag over the dreary wastes. The Frenchmen burned their own flags to save them from capture. Hardly had a horse fallen when the famishing sufferers scrambled upon the carcass and fought over its division. No one helped up his comrade who sank by the wayside unable to rise, but instead he dropped upon the body to gain the slight warmth therefrom before it wholly left the fast freezing form. When the howling Cossacks swooped down upon them they cowered, dazed and helpless; and if the enemy preferred slaying to taking them prisoners, they did not raise a hand to defend themselves. Muskets fell from the rigid hands and took the frozen fingers with them; tears froze on the sunken cheeks; soldiers ripped open horses and pushed their own bodies inside for the sake of the few minutes' heat thus obtained; men fed upon one another, and the long, dismal, seemingly never-ending road was often shut from sight by the dead bodies of soldiers and animals.

They reached Smolensk, which might be termed the half-way station, on November 9. There they found some insufficient stores, seized them, and hurried on. The colder and more terrible half of their journey was still before them. On November 26 they reached the Beresina River. By this time they were a mere mob, the Russians hunting them like dogs. The bridges over the river broke under the weight of the fugitives, and the Russians discharged cannon at the ice, so that it also gave way under the fleeing French. They were drowned by thousands. Those the icy water spared, the Russian shot ploughed through and through. It was not battle, it was only massacre.

Threatening news of doings in Paris was brought to Napoleon in the midst of his hideous retreat. Others, he heard, were seeking to wrest his authority from him, and he determined to leave the army and make all haste to his capital, that he might check the movements that presaged his downfall. At Smorgoni, on the 5th of December, he called his marshals around him and said:





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